

Study on the Forms of Aesthetic Education and Practical Approaches in College Yoga Courses from the Perspective of Integrating Physical and Aesthetic Education

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Abstract

The integration of physical education and aesthetics is an important direction in the reform of school sports in the new era. Based on the perspective of integrating physical education and aesthetics, this paper employs literature review and logical analysis methods to systematically study the aesthetic education forms and practical approaches of yoga courses in colleges and universities. The study finds that yoga courses manifest multi-level and inherently unified aesthetic education forms—such as the beauty of life, the beauty of the body, harmonious beauty, and moral beauty—through the regulation of breathing rhythm, the shaping of postures, the coordination of movement rhythm, and the cultivation of the mind through meditation. This represents a vivid practice of strengthening the body through the beauty of physical education. However, current courses face issues such as inadequate implementation of the integration concept, superficial exploration of cultural and aesthetic connotations, and teaching models and faculty unable to support the deepening of aesthetic education. Therefore, this paper proposes reforms along three paths: innovating a curriculum content system that coexists with physical and aesthetic education, constructing a classroom teaching model immersed in aesthetics, and building a professional faculty team that integrates both fields to fully realize the unique value of yoga courses in promoting the coordinated development of college students' physical and mental health and aesthetic literacy.

Keywords

Integration of physical and aesthetic education; School sports; Yoga courses; Aesthetic education.

1. Introduction

In October 2020, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued The Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Physical Education in the New Era, stating: "School physical education is a foundational project for realizing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and enhancing students' comprehensive quality. It is important work for accelerating the modernization of education and building a strong country in education and sports" [1]. Aesthetic education, in essence, is an educational activity that cultivates, refines, and shapes individuals, endowing them with noble character. By stimulating aesthetic needs, fostering aesthetic appreciation abilities, and developing the capacity to create beauty, it ultimately promotes the all-round development of individuals [2]. The realization of aesthetic

education must be based on physical practice, a need precisely met by school physical education. Through physical activities, students can not only exercise, enhance their physique, but also experience aesthetic sensations and cultivate aesthetic taste. Therefore, a natural connection exists between school physical education and aesthetic education. They can complement and promote each other, jointly laying a solid foundation for the holistic development of students.

2. Current Status of University Yoga Courses from the Perspective of Physical-Aesthetic Integration

2.1. Lack of Integration in Domestic Research and Practice

Yoga, with its characteristic of unifying body and mind, has been incorporated into the university physical education curriculum system, and related academic attention continues to grow. However, viewed from the perspective of P-A integration, a significant gap exists between current research and teaching practice. On one hand, academic research predominantly focuses on the fitness benefits of yoga, teaching methods, or discussions of its singular cultural attributes, lacking systematic analysis of its educational mechanisms from the level of physical-aesthetic interaction [3-4]. On the other hand, course practice often remains at the level of posture imitation, with fragmented teaching content where aesthetic and cultural connotations are severely [5]. Teaching commonly exhibits a phenomenon of prioritizing form over meaning and technique over culture. Both teachers and students have insufficient understanding of the Eastern philosophy, life aesthetics, and spiritual cultivation embedded in yoga, reducing it to ordinary physical exercise where physical and aesthetic elements are mixed but not truly integrated [6]. Furthermore, teaching faculty mostly consists of teachers transitioning from other sports disciplines, and their aesthetic literacy and integrated teaching capabilities need improvement [7].

2.2. Holistic Insights from International Experience

Internationally, yoga has long transcended the realm of fitness to become a life philosophy integrating physical and mental health. The differentiation and flourishing of its schools reflect the respect and fulfillment of diverse physical-mental needs and aesthetic experiences. The application of yoga in foreign educational fields places greater emphasis on its comprehensive role in promoting concentration, emotional management, creativity, and community harmony. This provides important insights for us to move beyond a singular biological view of sports and reconstruct the goals and content of university yoga courses from the perspective of P-A integration, or even "holistic education."

3. The Value of Aesthetic Education Inherent in Yoga Courses

3.1. The Beauty of Breath

In yoga courses, breath is often considered the foundation of life and the core of yoga practice. Through conscious control of breath (pranayama), one can regulate the flow of energy in the body, calm the mind, and enhance physical flexibility and balance. Simultaneously, breathwork helps relax the body and mind, reduce stress, and improve attention and concentration.

3.2. The Beauty of Rhythm

In yoga courses, practice is often coordinated with breath, generally categorized into steady, deep breathing and rhythmic breathing patterns. Before beginning practice, steady and deep breathing is pursued to allow air to fully enter the lungs, providing the body with ample oxygen supply. This breathing method allows one to feel bodily relaxation and comfort while also bringing greater peace and tranquility to the mind. During practice, the focus shifts to rhythmic breathing, emphasizing the coordination of breath with bodily movements. Through rhythmic

breathing, one can better perceive bodily movement and energy flow, enhancing physical coordination and a sense of rhythm.

3.3. The Beauty of Posture

In yoga courses, the expression of postural beauty is primarily manifested through body shaping and posture adjustment. Through the practice of various yoga asanas (postures), students can effectively exercise different parts of the body, strengthen muscles, and improve flexibility and balance. Long-term consistent practice leads to more body lines, an upright posture, and a more dignified bearing. For example, postures like Warrior Pose (Virabhadrasana) and Triangle Pose (Trikonasana) can stretch leg and waist muscles, shaping body curves. Balancing postures like Tree Pose (Vrikshasana) and Eagle Pose (Garudasana) can enhance the body's sense of balance and coordination. Simultaneously, through specific asana practice and breathing methods, yoga helps students adjust their bodily postures and improve their physical form.

3.4. The Beauty of the Mind

In yoga courses, the beauty of the mind/spirit primarily includes inner peace, emotional release, and moral cultivation. Firstly, meditation and breathing exercises in yoga can help students relax, reduce stress, and achieve inner peace [8]. For instance, during meditation practice, the teacher guides students to close their eyes and focus on their breath, excluding external distractions and thoughts. Through this method, self-awareness and concentration are enhanced. Simultaneously, meditation and breathwork can help cultivate inner peace and tranquility, strengthening psychological resilience to better cope with life's challenges. Secondly, yoga practice encourages students to release inner emotions—such as anger, sadness, or fear—through bodily movement and breath. Students can express their emotions through various asanas and breathing methods, allowing negative emotions to be released. For example, chest-opening postures can help release feelings of irritability or anger. Finally, yoga practice emphasizes not only the cultivation of body and mind but also the development of moral character. Yoga philosophy emphasizes the importance of virtues like honesty, kindness, tolerance, and gratitude. Through the practice of yoga aesthetic education, practitioners can achieve comprehensive improvement in body and mind while also cultivating good moral character.

4. Practical Pathways for Yoga Course Teaching

4.1. Innovation in Yoga Course Teaching Content

Zhang Jinchao suggests that teachers can strengthen the integration of yoga course content with music, utilizing music to achieve different teaching objectives and meet the requirements of various teaching stages. Creating a harmonious yoga classroom atmosphere allows emotional factors to be better integrated into yoga teaching. Under musical accompaniment, the softness and peace of form can be displayed, and human senses, following the music's rhythm, melody, and atmosphere, can more easily engage emotional factors [9]. Therefore, yoga course teaching should emphasize integration with content from other disciplines, leveraging overall synergy to promote the development of yoga course content towards diversification and multi-dimensionality.

4.2. Construction of Yoga Course Teaching Models

Yoga courses possess rich aesthetic characteristics such as the beauty of breath, rhythm, posture, and mind/spirit. The beauty of yoga is manifested through physical movement. Shaping a healthy, beautiful human body can comfort the soul. The artistic beauty of yoga relies on the expression of its various asanas. A yoga aesthetic education teaching model can

appropriately integrate the aesthetic characteristics of yoga with the goals of aesthetic education. By developing scientifically sound yoga aesthetic education content, it can enhance university students' abilities to perceive, recognize, and create beauty [10]. Therefore, in the practical process of yoga courses, there is a need to continuously improve teaching models to better meet student needs. Diverse teaching methods should be adopted, such as demonstration, explanation, and interaction. Simultaneously, greater emphasis should be placed on the accumulation of aesthetic knowledge, constructing a classroom teaching model permeated with aesthetic appreciation. The teaching model should shift from imitation to guidance, experience, and co-creation. Classroom teaching should consciously incorporate the creation of aesthetic contexts, the use of evocative language to describe beauty, and exchanges involving aesthetic reflection.

4.3. Strengthening the Development of Yoga Teacher Teams

Currently, yoga teaching in Chinese universities is still in its preliminary development stage. Most universities lack a sufficient number of professional yoga teachers; most yoga instructors are either by teachers from other sports disciplines or are from dance backgrounds [11]. This inevitably leads to a lack of professionalism and systematization in the teaching process. Active encouragement should be given for yoga teachers to participate in various professional training sessions and seminars to continuously enhance their teaching standards and professional competence. Regular internal teacher exchanges and sharing activities should be organized, allowing teachers to learn from each other and progress together. By sharing teaching experiences and discussing teaching challenges, teachers can continually refine their teaching methods and improve teaching quality. Furthermore, assessment and feedback on teachers' instruction should be implemented. Through methods like student evaluations and peer reviews, problems in teaching can be promptly identified, and corresponding measures taken for improvement.

5. Conclusion

University yoga courses represent a highly potential practical vehicle for the concept of P-A integration. From the perspective of P-A integration, this study systematically demonstrates that yoga courses, through physical practice, naturally give rise to a multi-layered, integrated aesthetic education form encompassing the beauty of life, form, harmony, and moral character. However, achieving deep P-A integration requires curriculum reform to move beyond simple content addition towards conceptual reshaping and systemic reconstruction. In the future, universities should focus on constructing a "physical-aesthetic symbiosis" curriculum content system guided by aesthetic education goals, exploring new "aesthetically permeated" classroom teaching forms, and vigorously cultivating interdisciplinary, integration-capable teaching faculty. Only in this way can yoga courses truly become a high-quality educational platform integrating physical strengthening, aesthetic cultivation, and character development, contributing uniquely to cultivating new-era talents who are physically and mentally harmonious, emotionally rich, and of sound character.

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